

THE GREATER HALF OF THE CONTINENT.

It is not a little singular that, in this country, and in this period of the easy acquirement of general information, so little is known of the greater half of the continent of North America, included within the British possessions. It shows, for instance, how little is known even of the broadest generalities, when the statement is received with surprise, if not incredulity, that, excluding Alaska, Canada is a larger country than the United States. Yet such is the case; for the United States, prior to the purchase of Alaska, was included within 3,036,000 square miles, while Canada stretches out to fill 3,470,392 square miles. It would perhaps help to convey some conception of the magnitude of Canada when the statement is made that, in area, it comprises very nearly forty per cent. of the entire British Empire, the extent of which is recalled by the boast that the sun never sets on British possessions. A still further rather startling statement in relation to Canada is, that, including the great lakes which encircle it and which penetrate it, and the rivers of enormous size and length which permeate it, in it is found more than one-half of the fresh water of the entire globe. Such broad generalities as these may well excite the attention of the people of the United States,

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